

Bird man

Home Sweet Home

“So,” is all Cartimandua said too me.

It was obvious she was pleased, amused, looking forward to the challenge that the new Vern Lukas presented her.

That was our meeting after such a long absence; I was saddened, no kisses, words of passion, well I was still a fool for she was still a queen.

But there was my beautiful daughter and had her mother’s dark looks and wings which pleased me for she was blessed with flight where as I was cursed, flightless.

The sole reason why the imperialists hated the Bird people, flight.

I hugged and kissed my daughter.

Let her know she was loved even if she was in a dysfunctional family.

My parents, would they be shocked their grandchild had wings? Or pleased they had a grandchild?

At least I had no worries about meeting Cartimandua’s parents for they were like her, birds!

Then Tzu Strath’s shells landed, they did that quite regularly, but these were not humans but the last of the free; and if they had been humans they did get shelled anyway.

Between the shell burst kids came out too play; there was a lot of twisted little bodies in the gutters.

Kids are kids.

Shells are shells.

Bird man

I understood Nostradamus at last.

I also forgot what the conquering Bird men did to vanquished: trophies!

And forgot Mingo's kindness to human children.

Like us they were a contradiction.

Up in arms about the cruel treatment to a Griffin but could turn a blind eye to child trafficking.

JUST LIKE HUMANS and maybe that is why we hated them, we saw ourselves.

But my daughter Ena was in this bombarded city, I must get her out.

And I had previously judged these peoples on my human terms that they would sign a peace treaty giving away their lands to Tzu!

What an ignorant fool I was?

So shells exploded outside in the gardens, swamps drained into lily ponds.

Where could this brave people go?

They were the center of their world, just like every other Bird Nation claimed to be.

Where was Mingo Drum Vercingetorix and many regretted not submitting to him and confronting the human enemy as a united front, now it was too late?

And Cartimandua drugged me.

When the wooziness hit me I was alarmed, afraid and thought she was going to do bad things too me.

But when I awoke, she had given me wings.

Sore but wings needing physiotherapists to get them into shape. Then I would be able to fly, take my daughter Ena on picnics too far distant crystal clear lakes.

Bird man

Then the artillery barrage started.

Cedric Henry was massing his troops for the ASSUALT.

“Marry me Cartimandua?” I asked her from my bedside.

A very long pregnant pause.

“Yes,” she replied, did she love me or was thinking of the future, married to Vern Lukas was an open sure bet not to end up as an alcoholic prostitute in some human bar in down town Torrs 6.

“You will be a king for a day and a night,” she replied.

Thinking of kings I thought of Mingo, did she still love him? So what, I was her man now, **that's what mattered.**

Anyway I couldn't wait to try out my wings!

I knew I could fly.

Just like Mingo Drum Vercingetorix.

Except I am a warrior whose weapon is the pen.

And behind the war Lord's troops Dictator Cedric Henry was issuing orders.

Take no prisoners.

And the first wave of his troops across the river would be friendly Bird men.

“There is your true enemy, the Gododdin, go and kill them,” and in that belief forgot they were butchering their own kind.

And the big assault guns opened up.

“King Vern, King Vern,” the Gododdin warriors shouted as Cartimandua married me.

Bird man

It was the Bird man custom to marry whom you chose and I had no illusions who was the real ruler here and neither did the warriors.

Cartimandua.

“Go and lead them Vern,” Cartimandua with Ena’s tiny hand holding her right palm.

Was going to my death? Was she getting rid of me that quickly?

Was I making way for Mingo and remembering him I imagined him proud of me as I went to the front of the Gododdin formation and went into battle.

I imagined Cartimandua and Ena waving goodbye to me.

In fact Cartimandua had given Ena away to a nanny and mounted a Griffin to lead her Griffin Legion to battle, death and glory.

And I saw her overtake us as Griffin's were the heavy shook troops as they swarmed amongst the friendly Bird men of Henry.

My Cartimandua in her gold body armour looked exciting, glowing in the sunshine.

A target for snipers, oh no Dispater no no no!

But she was magnificent, resplendent in her bravery and example of valour to her people.

She was indeed a queen and above her flew the women, lightly armed to fly quickly behind the imperial lines and cut off supplies, raid and flee.

Where was my Mingo with his phalanx of ants, then we did show them?

NOW THE SILENCE OF THE BIG GUNS.

“We are the last of the free.

Bird man



Illustration 93: The queen rode into battle a symbol of defiance.

“We are the last of the free.

To the north are the cold polar ice caps.

In front of us the enemy.

Better to die free than slaves,” was shouted by thousands of throats.

And some friendly Bird men hesitated so slipped away not wanting to kill the last of the free; while others took careful aim and killed some last of the free for we were the crazy ones, those who threatened the supply of civilizations benefits, the holographic televisions, the freezers and supermarkets that had the food to fill them.

And better, sleazy bars to erode the culture they were born into; now they were just aliens in an empire so big the sun never set upon.